

REMARKS

Claims 2-10, 12, 14, and 28-35 are pending and stand rejected. The independent claims are claims 2, 10, 12, 14, and 28.

Independent claims 2 and 28 stand rejected as obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) from *Teresawa* (U.S. Patent No. 6,147,714) in view of *Wasilewski* (U.S. Patent No. 5,600,378). Independent claims 10, 12, and 14 stand rejected in further view of *Field* (U.S. Patent No. 6,018,764). Applicants note that both *Wasilewski* and *Field* are new references that were not cited in any previous Office Action in this case.

The limitations of claim 9 are now inserted into all of the independent claims. Claim 9 was rejected as obvious from a combination of *Teresawa*, *Wasilewski*, and *Field*.

Applicants respectfully point out that the *Field* reference was filed on 10 December 1996 during the month previous to the present Applicants' priority date of 17 January 1997. Enclosed is a Declaration swearing back the *Field* reference.

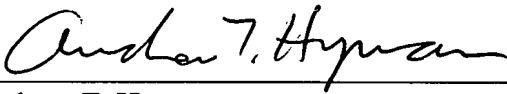
CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims of the present application define patentable subject matter and are patentably distinguishable over the cited references for the reason that the present invention was conceived before *Field*. The rejections of the non-final Official Action being inapplicable, retraction thereof is requested, and early passage of the pending claims to issue is earnestly solicited.

Applicants would appreciate if the Examiner would please contact Applicants' attorney by telephone, if that might help to speedily dispose of any unresolved issues pertaining to the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 12 Sept. 2007



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